Chapter 7

Strategies for Effective Adaptation:
The Case of the OECD Member States

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ABSTRACT

This chapter deals with the OECD migration policy and its strong points that were revealed in the last 20 years. The author also explains how the OECD migration policy responds to technological, economic, and social challenges. In effective adaptation of foreign migrants, the principal role is mainly assigned to monitoring of the OECD member states. The outstanding practices of the latter turned out to be highly important for shaping the migration policies of other countries’ migration. This chapter also shows the examples of the labor migrants’ adaptation in the OECD labor market, particularly, a bottleneck vacancies analysis of the Nordic countries, Baltic States, and Central Eastern Europe. Institutions, traditions and employability are extremely important parameters for migrants’ adaptation for labor markets.

INTRODUCTION

Migration is both a complex and multifaceted phenomenon that affects many spheres of society. As it is highlighted in the World Prospects Report 2015, “from 2000 to 2015, annual net migration to Europe, Northern America and Oceania averaged 2.8 million persons per year. When countries are grouped by income rather than geography, the attraction of high-income countries is even more evident: from 2000 to 2015, high-income countries received an average of 4.1 million net migrants annually from lower- and middle-income countries. Economic and demographic asymmetries across countries are likely to remain powerful generators of international migration within the medium-term future. Large-scale refugee movements have also had a profound influence on the level of net migration experienced by some countries, including those affected recently by the Syrian crisis” (World population prospects, 2015).

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At the same time, the World Bank Report pointed out that “global productivity and poverty reduction would accelerate enormously with the free movement of labor. Both recipient states and donor states will benefit from migration” (World Development Report. Jobs, 2013).

Europe is still one of the most popular destinations with 72 million international migrants living there, data as of 2013 (UN Press Release, 2017). Globally, the largest regional migrant groups are Asians and Latin Americans who live outside their countries of origin. In 2013, the Asians became the largest migrant group, with 19 million living in Europe alone (UN Press Release, 2017). International migration is also characterized by high concentration although the number of countries involved has significantly increased in the last four decades: in 2013, 10 countries accounted for about half of international migrants. The US was ranked first with 45.8 mln migrants followed by Russia (11mln), Germany (9.8mln), the United Kingdom (7.8 mln), France (7.4mln), Spain (6.5mln) (UN Press Release, 2017).

Taking into account recent huge migration flows across the world, it is highly important to update mechanisms of migration policy regulation following the example of the OECD member states. Their migration regulations make it possible to avoid unbalanced immigration and pursue the most optimal policy. In order to determine the specific directions, their characteristics will be outlined on the examples of Finland, Sweden, Iceland, Canada, Australia, Denmark, the USA alongside with the Baltic States and some of the Central Eastern Europe countries. We will continue then with the analysis of migrants’ employability, bottleneck vacancies’ analysis in the Northern Europe, Central Eastern Europe and the Baltic States.

Obviously, the demand for skills or immigrant labor does not necessarily guarantee easy passage for all of them. Employability skills such as literacy and numeracy, technical skills, and good personal skills (integrity, reliability, punctuality, learning capacity) are often in demand. According to employers’ surveys carried out by the ILO, the ETF, and Cedefop, “employability skills” rather than “the ability to do work well” are highly crucial for the OECD labor markets.

**METHODOLOGY**

The research reflects on the data analysis presented mainly on the OECD materials as well as documents of the United Nations, the Eurostat, the World Bank and scientific literature. Statistical methods have been actively used for data processing as applied to vacancies and migrants’ unemployment indicators.

In order to scrutinize migrants’ specific adaptation features at a new for them labor market as well as prospects of the selected OECD economic sectors in terms of employment and labor market indicators, a functional-structural vacancy analysis was widely applied, taking into account geographical and regional components, the level of vocational education, technological performance of certain economic sectors and employers’ qualification requirements to job applicants.

In order to study the employment relations between migrants and resident population in the OECD member-states as well as migrants’ employment peculiarities in these countries a systematic approach was applied, with an emphasis on migration growth, institutions regulating labor migration, institutional and social rootedness, best foreign practices etc. Comparative analysis of employability characteristics in the OECD member states has been also conducted basing on the aggregated indicators developed on the basis of quantitative and qualitative parameters grouped according to expert analysis results.